

## CHAPTER 297

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**HUMAN SERVICES - SOCIAL SERVICES**

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**SENATE BILL 19-230**

BY SENATOR(S) Moreno, Bridges, Court, Donovan, Fenberg, Fields, Foote, Ginal, Gonzales, Pettersen, Story, Todd, Williams A., Winter, Zenzinger;  
also REPRESENTATIVE(S) Herod, Arndt, Benavidez, Bird, Buentello, Coleman, Duran, Exum, Galindo, Gonzales-Gutierrez, Gray, Hooton, Jackson, Jaquez Lewis, Kennedy, Kipp, Lontine, Michaelson Jenet, Mullica, Roberts, Singer, Sirota, Snyder, Valdez A., Weissman, Becker.

**AN ACT****CONCERNING THE COLORADO REFUGEE SERVICES PROGRAM.**

*Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

**SECTION 1. Legislative declaration.** (1) The general assembly finds and declares that:

(a) More than 68.5 million people have been displaced as a result of ongoing crisis, war, and conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo; Syria; Afghanistan; Burma, also known as Myanmar; Yemen; Iraq; and other countries;

(b) The global refugee crisis has forced a historic number of individuals and families who have experienced persecution to flee their homes and seek safety elsewhere;

(c) Refugees approved for resettlement by the United States government have been rigorously vetted and lawfully admitted to the United States under the federal "Refugee Act of 1980", Pub.L. 96-212, and more than 60,000 refugees have made Colorado their home since 1980;

(d) After escaping war and persecution and fleeing their homes to live in peace and improve their lives, refugees integrate into the United States and contribute to the communities that welcome them;

(e) Refugees make vital contributions to Colorado's economy, supplying a reliable, diverse, and taxpaying workforce that contributes to our state's continued

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*Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material added to existing law; dashes through words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law and such material is not part of the act.*

economic vibrancy;

(f) The Colorado refugee services program and its partners provide vital services and support to help refugees realize their potential, achieve integration, and participate fully in the social and economic life of Colorado's communities; and

(g) This act affirms Colorado's commitment to welcoming refugees and ensures the long-term preservation of the refugee resettlement program to support refugee integration into Colorado communities.

**SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** 26-2-138 as follows:

**26-2-138. Refugee services program - state plan - rules - definitions.** (1) AS USED IN THIS SECTION, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE REQUIRES:

(a) "FEDERAL ACT" MEANS TITLE IV OF THE FEDERAL "IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT", 8 U.S.C. SEC. 1521 ET SEQ., AS AMENDED, INCLUDING ANY FEDERAL RULES ADOPTED PURSUANT TO THE FEDERAL ACT.

(b) "PROGRAM" MEANS THE COLORADO REFUGEE SERVICES PROGRAM ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (2)(a) OF THIS SECTION.

(c) "STATE PLAN" MEANS COLORADO'S REFUGEE SERVICES PLAN, DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (2)(b) OF THIS SECTION.

(2) (a) THE COLORADO REFUGEE SERVICES PROGRAM IS ESTABLISHED IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT. THE PROGRAM MUST BE ADMINISTERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE STATE PLAN DEVELOPED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND APPROVED BY THE FEDERAL OFFICE OF REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT WITHIN THE FEDERAL DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES PURSUANT TO THE FEDERAL ACT.

(b) THE STATE DEPARTMENT IS THE SINGLE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT, REVIEW, AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE STATE PLAN.

(3) THE PROGRAM MUST PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FEDERAL ACT AND THE STATE PLAN:

(a) REFUGEE CASH ASSISTANCE;

(b) REFUGEE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE;

(c) REFUGEE SOCIAL SERVICES, WHICH MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, EMPLOYABILITY ASSESSMENTS, ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION, VOCATIONAL TRAINING, SKILLS RECERTIFICATION, AND CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES RELATED TO EMPLOYMENT; AND

(d) ANY OTHER SERVICES OR ASSISTANCE CONSISTENT WITH THE FEDERAL ACT.

(4) THE PROGRAM MAY PROVIDE OTHER SERVICES OR ASSISTANCE TO SUPPORT REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT AND INTEGRATION.

(5) THE STATE DEPARTMENT SHALL ADOPT RULES, IN ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 4 OF TITLE 24, TO IMPLEMENT THIS SECTION.

(6) THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY MAY APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROGRAM.

**SECTION 3. Act subject to petition - effective date.** This act takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly (August 2, 2019, if adjournment sine die is on May 3, 2019); except that, if a referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V of the state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this act within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will not take effect unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in November 2020 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.

Approved: May 28, 2019